open sleeves and the skirt dropping to the ankles are put on, although in the case of village women only one or two outer dresses, usually dark blue in colour, are used. For a headdress, the peasant wife, and, to a certain extent, townswomen of the poorer houses, have a cap combined with a turban for everyday use. The cap, mentioned above as embroidered on a loose piece of cloth and stitched together by the purchaser, is of the "pill-box" rather than the hemispherical shape. The turban, in contrast to that of the men, is permanently sewn to it, and is also a dark blue in colour, a single roll of cloth. 291

The matter of the veil requires some discussion, a restriction which, of course, has no existence among the women themselves and immature children. In general, Kurdish women of the upper class may only appear uncovered before the men of their family, and, if of sufficient age and dignity, to male friends of the house. On the other hand, women of the villages, faced with the exigencies of their life, working in the fields and going to market, are always unveiled and a trip to the bazar crowded with men affords them no discomfort. However, the appearance of a socially prominent or alien person may cause them to hide their heads. Brazenness, deprecated by many of the men, disappears in a moment, perhaps in some fear of the evil eye. Save in the case of an older woman of aristocratic lineage, the sustained glance of a stranger will cause almost any rural Kurdish woman, no matter what her rank, to turn away or to run. The veil, associated with the upper classes, is also 291 562 [754] [576] [409]

The heart of the matter is to be found in the distinction between a society governed by the state and one ruled by tribal or feudal chieftains. The state is no stranger to the area of the Middle East, for it was in this province that it probably made its first appearance and some of the more complex bureaucracies of history were evolved. Nevertheless, there are certain places, Kurdistan among them, where it is a newcomer, and others, such as Saudi Arabia, where it has yet to appear. Ottoman control in Kurdistan was rarely strong, and was characterized by a sort of daily contest between the scattered authorities, supported by their troops and gendarmes, and the local inhabitants in matters of tax-collection and recruitment for the army. Beyond the borders of Turkey and other well-organized districts, the Ottoman Empire was largely oriented for tribute, the enrichment of its officers and the Sublime Porte, and the Turks, aside from their inroads and the prestige attached to conquerors, did little to tamper with the economy and the social structure of their subjects. Rowanduz, before the first World War, was led by its aristocrats and its merchants, and the meager representation of Ottoman rule was regarded as an everyday annoyance which could be circumvented, bribed, or ambushed as the occasion demanded. Insofar as the Turks were satisfied with what little money and recruits they were able to collect, they were not considered greatly detrimental to life.

The rise of the modern state in Iraq provides in places such as Rowanduz, good examples of the impingement

4: Hansen E-5 (1957) -1961 MA11 Kurd MA11

and sons. Secondly, distant relatives of the married couples. In addition the family's courtyard and three-walled central room were open to men who were subordinates of the sheikh, economically dependent on him, or of a status that could be compared with this. In Topzawa this included the peasants who ploughed and harvested the sheikh's fields and the drivers who drove the lorries he and his brother had in their capacity of contractors for the construction work at Dukan Dam. The house was also open to beggars and to sayyids. The sheikh families at Sargala and Sarkan had both men and women servants. With the latter family there lived permanently a blind *mulla*[8], who occupied the women's part of the house and who, it is true, ate with the women of the house but he was paid by the sheikh and was thus a dependant. Men from the Gendarmerie, members of the Land Settlement Commission, and Europeans were not admitted to the family house where women were. These men were strangers by whom the women must not be seen. It can therefore be said that though seclusion is practised by the village aristocracy, it is in an elastic form that allowed definite categories of men, dependants in one way or another, access to the women's domain. This elasticity may help to explain the fact that Soane, disguised as a Persian merchant, and later, after the first World War, the British officers of the Mandate period, could be received by Halabja's first lady, Lady Ajdda, who after Osman Pasha's death became the head of the family. That she regarded Soane, who took employment with her son and of whose nationality she was unaware, as a subordinate there is no doubt. If she also considered the British officers as subordinates compared with her own position as representative of the town's most distinguished family, she would not by meeting them sacrifice any of her dignity or step outside the framework of her seclusion.

My impression was that, in the aristocratic village milieu, seclusion was not so much the result of an order from the men as a wish on the part of the women not to be seen by male strangers.

The classic seclusion practised among the Kurds seemed to me to be far more like the British idea of "my house is my castle" than a form of incarceration. In consequence I do not believe that a male investigator is correct when writing that among the Kurds he visited in the Rowanduz district "... the Aghas consistently make a show of being very strict about the seclusion and veiling of their womenfolk when strangers are present while countrymen, if they bother at all, are lax and casual"[9]. In my view it was the women themselves who felt the value of hindering male strangers from seeing them.

In support of this there is what a woman like Blackman says about conditions among the Egyptian *fellahin*: "To our western ideas such restrictions are apt to be regarded as a form of tyranny, but it is not a fair judgement. Seclusion is partly a sign of respect ... and indicates the value that the men put upon their womenfolk"[10]. As a result it is naturally in women's own interest to maintain seclusion. Incidentally, Lane reports of the Arab women in Egypt: "Still it might be imagined that the women of the higher and middle classes feel themselves severely oppressed, and are much discontented with the state of seclusion to which they are subjected; but this is not commonly the case; on the contrary, an Egyptian wife who is attached to her husband is apt to think, if he allows her unusual liberty, that he neglects her, and does not sufficiently love her, and to envy those wives who are kept and watched with greater strictness."[11] Barnes states something similar about conditions in India: "The Mohammedan ladies of South India are very strictly secluded, and are proud of it. They look upon it as a mark of respectful care, and are very contemptuous of women who are not taken care of in the same

619 This whole framework of formal organization may be diagrammatically illustrated as below, Diagram 3.

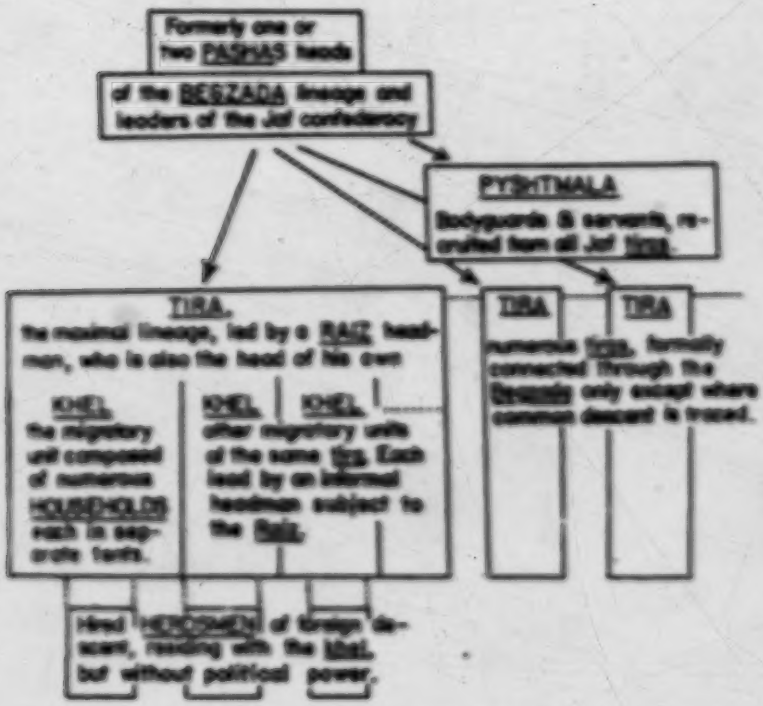
Formerly one or two PASHAS heads
of the BEGZADA lineage and leaders of the Jaf confederacy
PYRHMALA
Bodyguards & servants, recruited from all Jaf tirās.
TIRA,
the maximal lineage, led by a RAIS headman, who is also the head of his own
KHEL,
the migratory unit composed of numerous HOUSEHOLDS each in separate tents.
KHEL,
KHEL,
other migratory units of the same tira. Each lead by an informal headman subject to the Rais.
TIRA
TIRA
numerous tirās, formally connected through the Begzada only except where common descent is traced.
Hired HERDSMEN of foreign descent, residing with the khel, but without political power.

Diagram No. 3. Formal organization of the nomadic Jaf.

556 233 Within the *khel*, wealth, primarily in the form of herds, is the main source of power. Any member of the *tira* has unlimited grazing rights for his flocks, so there is no legal limit to the accumulation 609 233 of wealth. The cattle are herded in flocks of 100 or so, with one herdsman for each flock. Herdsmen are preferably hired among the poor people of the *tira*, or they may be «foreigners» associated with the *khel* purely because of their economic functions. The typical pattern is to exploit poor relatives for this purpose, a practice familiar from Central Asiatic nomads (e. g. Hudson, 1938, p. 17). Self-

7: Barth E-S (1951) 1953 MA11 Kurd MA11

554 previous discussion, and are indeed implicit in the systems of status
621 hierarchies. An attempt will be made to relate the various status positions to ideal expressed on such scales, and in the final paragraphs of the section to outline the main scales on which individuals may be rated.

ECONOMIC CLASSES

565 The village hierarchy of class differences, based on division of
601 labor and attendant differences in wealth, has been discussed above, pp. 20 ff. This hierarchy is, as we saw, produced primarily by the feudal principle of delegation of work on the land, and is conceptualized in terms of distinct social classes, each with traditionally defined rights and privileges in their relations to each other. Each class is thus a status category, and they are arranged in a hierarchy leading from *laborer* through *tenant farmer*, occasionally an *intermediary capitalist*, and culminating in the *landowner*. This is in itself a power hierarchy, since each superior status directly gives opportunity for control over persons of inferior status positions, within the traditional limits. The *freeholding farmer* class, on the other hand, occupies a status partly divorced from this immediate power hierarchy. Characteristically, where such freeholding farmers are found in a village partly controlled by a large landowner, every effort seems to be made on the part of the landowner to secure property rights also to the remaining fraction of land, and thus place all members of the community in the unambiguous hierarchy of control and power. Consequently freeholding farmers with property of any significance are generally found in tribally organized communities, and a dichotomy between only freeholding vs. only tenant communities generally holds true. *Freeholding farmers* as a class tend to be on a par with the *tenant farmer* class in the larger class system, and frequently control a small group of *laborers*, and in certain areas also the serf class, the *Mrakjin*. The main features of the reciprocal relations between these classes have been sketched previously.

565 The special position of the *shepherd* remains to be discussed. He
621 is essentially a laborer, working for a stipulated annual payment in
293 kind (grain), but also receives a sheet of unleavened bread daily
609

7: Barth E-S (1951) 1953 MA11 Kurd MA11

from each household he serves. The status of the shepherd is rather low, and he is frequently a foreigner in the village. In point of fact, many of the field laborers are also of foreign origin, but they become more or less assimilated in the community, whereas the solitary occupation of the shepherd prevents or delays his complete assimilation. — In general, the sheep and goats tend to be herded by the small boys of the village — sons of laborers — and the adult shepherd or herdsman is put in charge only of the large cattle.

The position as mullah (roughly equivalent to priest), regarded as an occupational category in the economic scale, is of minor importance in the small Kurdish villages, and is generally supplemented by farming. Other resident occupational statuses are rarely found.

The following is an example of the class composition of a small tenant village:

	households	persons
absentee landowner	—	—
tenant farmers (incl. one mullah)	21	123
laborers	9	22
shepherd	1	3
widows with no near kin	2	4
total	33	152

RELIGIOUS CATEGORIES

We have so far distinguished two main hierarchies, one governing the field of political organization, and related to a scale of administrative authority, the second governing the economic field, and related to a scale of wealth. A remaining group of named status positions, less clearly hierarchically organized, governs the religious field. These are the positions of Derwish, Sheikh, *Seyyid*, Mullah, and *Hadji*.

Derwishes. The derwish religious fraternities illustrate, in their form and function, most clearly a general trend in the Kurdish villager's interpretation of Islam, and how the religious field may be brought into relation with the power hierarchy in the village community.

The Kurdish emphasis on power is in direct conflict with Moslem

554 addressed by it. Ali Agha of Bayat's full title is Hajji Ali Agha and he is sometimes addressed simply as Hajji. The nephew of Hamid Amin of Rowanduz had also made the pilgrimage and I never heard him called anything but Hajji.

The title Sayyid implies a descendant of the Prophet and carries with it the right to wear a green turban. The descent is probably in most cases mythical; anyway the Sayyids whom I met had every appearance of being pure bred Kurds. In the Balik area the only persons claiming this honour are the two Khalifas of Khalan and Ilmo - Alaeddin and his uncle Chalchilah.

554 The Turkish term Effendi is frequently applied to town notables who have no tribal linkage and thus cannot be called Aghas:- thus
• 609 Mustapha Effendi, the leading notable of Rowanduz. Similarly it is a title applied to scholars - my interpreter was known everywhere as Ismail Effendi.

Bakia (arabic 'doctor') is applied only to foreigners. I acquired this title myself after resolutely refusing to be either a 'Lord' or a 'Major'.

The field of investigation

102 The field of investigation is shown on the two maps at the end of this volume. It has been found impossible in a single colour line drawing to show the contour features of the country at all adequately and altitudes are merely indicated in figures. The area is covered by sections I 38 and J 38 of the International Map of the World (Scale 1: 1,000,000) while the Rowanduz area appears on section L 3 on the 4 miles to 1 inch War Office map of Iraq, Persia and Turkey in Asia.

102. 134 Map 1 which shows the whole of the Erbil Liwa of Iraqi-Kurdistan is divided into three areas A, B and C having both geographic and ethnographic significance.

[487] A. Rowanduz. This area, the main field of study, is shown in enlarged scale on Map 2. Prior to the construction of the motor road some ten years ago, this area was extremely inaccessible. Practically the only way of reaching the region was by way of a bandit infested mule track that led along the edge of the precipitous Rowanduz Gorge. The area is extremely mountainous. Rowanduz itself is some 3,000 feet above sea level and the peaks on the Persian border reach above 12,000 feet. Cool and well watered it presents a tremendous contrast to the arid plains of Mesopotamia. Comparatively little land is suitable for cultivation, and the steep inclines preclude the adoption of modern methods of [illegible].

* For photographs see Map pp. 208, 222.

8: Leach E-5 (1938) 1940 MA11 Kurd MA11
Rowanduz

635 directorate lies within the Province (liwa) of Erbil. "The civil head of the liwa is Mutasarrif who is directly responsible for the police administration and the magistracy and indirectly for such social services as Health, Education, Agricultural Reform etc. The tax organisation is closely associated with the police and also comes under the administration of the Mutasarrif. Outside his control however are the military and the judiciary.

635 871 644 Within the field of our discussion the social services of the government are very limited, though the education system is worthy of note. There are primary and secondary schools at Erbil and a primary school at Rowanduz. There was for a while a secondary school also at Rowanduz but this was closed following a nationalist strike by the students who demanded to be taught in the English language instead of Arabic. For obvious economic reasons these schools affect only a very

871 small stratum of society - the sons of important Aghas and town

875 merchants. Some of the larger villages have in addition a paid

• 609 government teacher. Though the intention is good, the practice is less so. The wages offered and the facilities for advancement are so poor that only the very poorest type of indolent scholar offers himself for such posts. In the Balik area anyway the experiment of government education has so far proved unfortunate. The current opinion seemed to be that all government education officers are moral perverts. Two examples serve to show the basis for such an attitude. The only schoolmaster among the Balik at the time of my visit was attached to the village of Dayet. Formerly he had been attached to the village of Bast where he had married one of the Agha's daughters; this lady he had now divorced or rather deserted and the Agha of Bast was suing him in the courts for maintenance. In Dayet he had seduced the daughter of the Balik and to avoid scandal had now married her, but this in itself was a complicated proceeding since the Balik and the schoolmaster are regarded

609 as enemies by nature - (since from the traditional viewpoint education is the Balik's chief function). In another case which is described more fully later the Agricultural Adviser of Baiah was murdered.

635 * At the time of my visit the post of Mutasarrif of Erbil was held by Ahmad Beg & Tawfiq Beg, a Kurd from the relatively sophisticated district of Sulaimani, a man of great intelligence and personal integrity. I am directly indebted to him for the facilities and assistance which enabled me to carry out this piece of field work, the more especially since his own political position at the time was somewhat delicate. Being related by marriage to the chiefs of the Pizdah tribes, at that time in revolt, he was regarded with a certain amount of suspicion by some of the Arab elements in the Baghdad government. This fact, coupled with a mild reputation for being pro-British - by no means a desirable sentiment in modern Iraq, - made my request for travel facilities a doubtful inconvenience. In the circumstances his help was deeply appreciated.

8: Leach E-5 (1938) 1940 MA11 Kurd MA11
Rowanduz

probably at the instigation of the Agha, because he was held to have corrupted the morals of the youth. 609

Health services need not concern us. In the area studied there is no resident doctor outside the city of Erbil. 758

The Government have made various experiments in agricultural reform chiefly with a view to improving the breed of livestock and the quality of valuable crops such as tobacco. The Government's interest in the improvement of the tobacco crop is especially relevant to the area here described. Details will be discussed later but it may be pointed out that Government assistance of this kind is not a philanthropic enterprise. The heavy excise duty levied on all saleable tobacco much more than repays any expenses incurred. 695 249

The independent judiciary functions through its court in Erbil. In practice however it is in the nature of appeal court, since in the first instance cases come before the Mudir (sub-district magistrate) and then before the Ca'im Maqam (district magistrate) before being referred to the court. I am not clear as to the rules governing "appeal" of this sort, nor as to the limits of sentence that can be imposed by the magistrates' courts. So far as I know, only serious cases such as homicide automatically go before the court at Erbil. 695 692

During time of peace the military are stationed only at Erbil and Rowanduz. There appears to be a general attitude of suspicion and conflict as between the civil and the military authorities. In this area the civil service is staffed mainly by Kurds and Turks and is thus in general inclination Kurdo-phil. The army on the other hand is staffed mainly by Iraqi-Arabs whose hatred and fear of the "barbarous Kurd" can be taken for granted. 695 101 578

The Liwa is divided into several districts (Kazas) each presided over by a district magistrate (Ca'im Maqam). Area A, Map 1 with which this account is mainly concerned lies wholly within the Kaza of Rowanduz. The Ca'im Maqam is responsible for his district in much the same way as the Mutasarrif is responsible for his Liwa. 695

The Kazas in turn is subdivided into several sub-districts (nahiya) over which presides a Mudir. The Balik tribe all reside within the nahiya Balik - the administrative district in this case coinciding with the tribal one. Dargala on the other hand is administered from Rowanduz.

The Mudir has in his direct control a number of policemen who provide the direct liaison between the external authority and the tribe. It is the reality of these junior officials which is the most feature of the system, and which is the real source of

464 late June and threshing proceeds steadily fro July to October. The
291 much smaller rice harvest comes about the end of September. With less wheat and no rice, threshing could be finished by mid-septmeber leaving labour free for the main work of the tobaccoharvest. On the other hand the tobacco plant requires a good deal of finicky attention during the early stages of its growth which coincide with the wheat harvest. It is possible therefore that any radical increase in the tobacco cultivation is dependent upon the introductin of improved methods of threshing. A much greater difficulty arises from the fact that the change in labour requirements would not be equally distributed as between different households. Whereas at present each household has approximately the same programme of work, the situation would be greatly complicated if one man's land was devoted to tobacco and his neighbour's only to wheat. The difficulty could be avoided if all the tobacco cultivators were 'owned' by the Agha: - thatis,every being under obligation to work for his Agha but not fora fellow commoner. Such a development would never be countenanced by he Government however since the system would be regarded as "exploitation" of the tribesmen by his chief."

249 Capital. The additional capital required for tobacco as opposed
648 to cereal cultivation is not very significant. The Government is prepared to supply seed and expert advice as far as I know the process of drying does not require any special technical apparatus. The reorganisation of the irrigation system would of course be an initial 'capital' expenditure for the community concerned.

Technique. On the other hand thepure statement that Government is prepared to offer expert advice rather oversimplifies the social aspects of the technical problem. I has already mentioned that the native Kurdish tobacco cured in the traditional manner results in a powdery substance that is quite useless to the purposes of a modern factory. In order to produce a marketable product, the farmer has to be taught entirely new methods. The reasons to have up against several types of difficulty. Firstly there is a simple conservative resistance, the dislike of new methods, not simply because they are new but because the practitioner in the old ethods thinks he knows best. But there are other difficulties of a much more intimate kind. Here is an example.

The Government are prepared to supply approved villages with a
249 trained expert to supervise the greenleaf harvesting of tobacco.
• 609 Such a man was supplied to the village of Balash. He was a Kurd, but a
648 townsman from the plains and by constrain evidently a man of low moral

• In Batas, where in functional terms the Assyrian Bishop takes the place of the Agha, the tobacco crop is owned by the Church, and difficulties over individual labour requirements thus avoided. But then a Christian Bishop is obviously not the same thing as a tribal Aghal

8: Leach E-S (1938) 1940 MAll Kurd MAll
Rowanduz

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character; it was alleged that he corrupted the villagers with alcohol and gambling and attempted to seduce their daughters, in particular the Mullo's daughter, in fact he was altogether a scoundrel. In due course he was found in the high road with two bullets through his body. The police took action. Two handsome looking swords from another tribe were brought before the courts and on the basis of somewhat elaborate circumstantial evidence convicted of murder. Handsome lawyer was never married and since the "swordsmith" mysteriously disappeared a few days after the trial. Whatever was the truth of this matter, local rumour had no doubts on the subject. The bullet wounds, the accept and conviction of the swords were all a frame up by the police, who had the cause not to fish in troubled waters. The murdered man had really died of strangulation - hanged in the guest house of Sheikh Mahmoud, Agha of Balook and chief of the Dalik.

This story was told me by Kamil Bebo of Sangaskan who was always eager to post a clerk on his cousin Sheikh Mahmoud. It appeared however to have some general currency there, when I was discussing the misdemeanours of the local administrator with the Agha of Sagrat, he referred to the Balook story. "These small Government servants! What do you expect? They're all scoundrels".

Whether the story is true or not is irrelevant, the effect among the Dalik is the same as if it had been true. Even though Sheikh Mahmoud's prestige is not as great as formerly, the fact, or even the rumour, that he had to hang his first and only agricultural adviser is a sufficient deterrent for any lesser Agha who may be contemplating agricultural reform within their own communities. This example brings out well how a problem which on the surface is purely economic may in practice be affected by a mass of seemingly irrelevant considerations in the field of ethics, tribal law, politics and religion.

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To sum up then. We have seen how the necessity for developing an export trade implies the necessity for increasing the tobacco acreage at the expense of cereal acreage, and I have tried to analyse not the forces of resistance which seem to prevent any immediate response to this incentive. Nevertheless the incentive is clearly very great. I was told for instance in Bebo that whereas in the old days the crops of the entire village had been worth barely £50 in cash, the tobacco sales in 1937 alone totalled £2,500. I believe therefore that in the hills also some rational alternative to the economic of agriculture must take place in the near future.

But it must be recognised that any such development must bring [illegible] both in the ideology of the people and of their social organisation. As things are, the hill country farmer sows not first of all to grow sufficient food for himself and his family. Only when he is assured of that does he turn his attention to the cultivation of luxury products such as tobacco. In short he aims at

by established Kurds from the Rowanduz area. Similar industrial developments further north would provide a labour market for the Kurds of the Erbil line. Interestingly the cheapest labour is that which is least organized. Once again the analogy with South African developments is very close.

Economic relations within the Village

The previous section dealt primarily with the economic relationships between the village group and the outside world, and the way in which changes in the form of this external context may be expected to affect the basic economic organization of village life. It is now necessary to consider the same set of phenomena from the point of view of the individual rather than of the village group as a whole.

In general the services for exchange within the village group are to be regarded as social rather than economic. The system of cultivation by family groups rather than individuals ensures that there is no great differentiation of economic status as between different communers, and trading contacts within the group are extremely commonly.

Crafts

An exception to this is the case of the weaver who occupies a specialist position by virtue of his trade. It should be noted that carding and spinning are not specialist occupations. For the most part the work is prepared and spun independently by the women of each household. The material is then washed by lime cloth by the weaver in return for payment either in cash or kind.*

Another individual sometimes occupying a specialist position is the herdsman. Both in Balook and Dergala the whole flock of goats and sheep was in charge of a single individual who apparently lived permanently in the open with his charges. It was explained to me that the herdsman was not a member of the village but a stranger, the various families-shareholders in the flock contributing jointly to his support. Though the flocks are thus herded together there is no suggestion of 'joint ownership', each one known his own sheep, this fact being amply demonstrated at milking time every morning and evening when the women folk go out to the grazing and pick out their own particular animals. In other villages conditions are rather different. For instance the Sheikhs of Bayat have large herds, and an elected shepherd part of the community separates off during the summer to form an independent hamlet, which tends to the cattle exclusively. I have no

* This describes the existing conditions. It is valid for Dergala but some of the other villagers now have no weaver of their own. The men still nearly all wear Turkish cloth, but the spinning and weaving is largely concentrated in Rowanduz and Erbil.

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ustom demands that her price should be a high one. It would need a very intimate knowledge of all concerned to find out what real transactions take place within the village on the occasion of a marriage. Where the marriage is to someone outside the village the position is more clear, especially in the case of the Aghas, though here again there is a tendency to exaggerate the figures involved. A point of some interest in the frequency with which Aghas or their sons marry the daughters of townspeople. For instance a son of Sheikh Mohammed of Balisan was married to a daughter of Mustafa Effendi, the leading notable of Rowanduz, and one of the wives of Mir Ismail Agha of Dargala was also a townswoman. Such marriages are socially approved, of us it is considered that townswomen bring with them an air of culture and sophistication. The reciprocal marriage of Aghas daughter to townsman's son is however most unusual, mainly because the townsman considers the tribal girl raw and uncivilized. The non tribal nature of the transaction thus represents a further partible such loss to the tribal group without any compensating return.* It is not to be supposed that the bride price payment is the only economic transaction taking place on the occasion of a marriage. Many relatives on both sides send presents to the bridegroom; these may be in kind or cash and in the case of marriages between important Agha families may amount to substantial sums.

Death. Compared with normal Kurdish usage the mourning ceremonies of the Harke, at any rate for Aghas, are unusually prolonged. While I was staying at Balisan the wife of Mustafa Agha, second son of Sheikh Mohammed, died. As Mustafa was the Agha of a neighbouring village I did not stay the ceremonies involved. I was told that the proceedings consisted principally of the bereaved sitting at home in his guest house and providing food and drink for all those friends and relatives who may think fit to come and condole with him. This would go on for a month. Moreover it was reckoned that as Mustafa had only a small guest house all his less immediate kin would have to be accommodated at Balisan. I gathered that the mourners would bring with them gifts which would at least approximately compensate for the cost of entertaining them, but the immediate economic strain occasioned by a death such as this may be considerable. As soon as Sheikh Mohammed heard the news he sent off riders to Rowanduz to fetch four sacks of sugar (56 kilos each), two bags of rice and a big roll

* Formerly it appears it was quite customary for commoners to sell their unmarried girl children to townsfolk. The girls were known as Kochiya. During adolescence she was a slave servant of the purchaser but might be married off quite respectably when she grew up. The system appears to have much in common with the mui tsai system of South China.

8: Leach E-S (1938) 1940 MAII Kurd MAII
Rowandu:

CHAPTER 4

The Limitations of the Foregoing Material

The reader may have noted a curious defect in the samples of evidence offered to support my generalizations. In nearly every case the authority quoted is either an Aghe or a near relative of an Aghe. It may reasonably be queried whether, - if all my informants had been commoners, - the same general picture of the social organization would have emerged. 124

The reasons for limiting my enquiry to Aghe sources were entirely practical ones. I was the first Englishman for some years to approach the district without some form of military protection, and since it was assumed that I must necessarily be a secret agent of the former sovereign power I was naturally the object of considerable curiosity and suspicion. The high policy that caused Britain to establish Iraq as an independent state is incomprehensible to the Kurdish tribesmen, and it is assumed that Britain is somehow an important link of connection between the English and the Arabs. Accordingly though I travelled with an official pass from the Ministry of the Interior, it was generally assumed that in some mysterious way I was plotting against the Government; my curiosity concerning the intimate details of Kurdish life was regarded as a cloak with which to hide my sinister designs. This put my Aghe hosts in an awkward position. Obligations of hospitality compelled them to treat me as an honoured guest, but if my coming implied, as was suspected, "that the English were coming back", then certainly they would be well advised to treat me well. On the other hand if I was really an enemy of the Arabs, any undue familiarity with me would surely lead to a relentless grilling at the hands of the police as soon as I had left. And there were further complications - Hamid Aska of Dargala warned my interpreter that he had not slept a wink throughout my stay. As he saw it, I was in mortal danger. This was a golden chance for his enemies - they had only to keep me off and it would be he that would get in disgrace with the Government! Accordingly four armed sentries were posted round my hut every night. 124 609

In this complex web of intrigue and distrust it is understandable that the Aghes, though willing enough that I should discuss village affairs with them personally, were extremely suspicious of anything that I might attempt to discover without their knowledge. Accordingly, since I believed at the time that I would be returning to the area later for more intensive study, I made little attempt to confirm the Aghe's description of affairs by means of chance interviews with commoners. This fact must be borne in mind by anyone using this monograph as a basis for further research. Even where the facts as described by me seem to be confirmed by further enquiry, it will be necessary to round the statement off by an analysis of the position as seen from the commoner's point of view. 84 124

St Roosevelt G-S (1946-1947) 1947 MA11 Kurd MA11
Mahabad

FORMATION OF THE KOMALA

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It was in this town of Mahabad, left to its own devices by the Allies, that the most recent of the Kurdish nationalist movements was born. On August 16, 1943, a dozen young Kurds, most of them small merchants and petty officials of the town, founded the Komala-i-Zhian-i-Kurd, or "Committee of Kurdish Youth." For purposes of secrecy, the membership of the new party was kept below 100 and was organized in cells; the semi-weekly meetings were never held in the same house twice in succession. The Constitution of the Komala was strongly nationalist and membership was restricted to persons of Kurdish descent on both sides of the family, the only exception being for those with an Assyrian mother—an indication of the present close relations between Kurds and Assyrians.

The Komala spread rapidly, not only in Iran but in other countries as well, where Kurds saw in the new group a more vigorous force than in the traditional Kurdish nationalist parties. Chapters of the Komala were founded in the Iraqi towns of Mosul, Kirkuk, Erbil, Suleimania, Rowanduz, and Shaklawa; and there was a chapter functioning even in Turkey, where Kurdish nationalist activity is an offense punishable by death. The chiefs of the tribes in the vicinity of Mahabad also sent emissaries offering help. They were told that they were not needed then, but might be called on in the future.

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It was inevitable that the two great powers primarily interested in the area should eventually hear of the Komala. The British, whose Kirkuk oil fields are located in Kurdish country, kept a watchful eye on developments. Their political adviser in Mosul sometimes ranged as far as Mahabad, while his subordinates were stationed in Rowanduz, Kirkuk, Erbil, and Suleimania. Yet the British could not encourage Kurdish aspirations without arousing Arab resentment, and so remained deaf to the overtures of the Kurdish nationalists.

SOVIET INFILTRATION

With the Soviets it was a different story. At first they were evidently unprepared for active work among the Kurds, although

9: Roosevelt G-8 (1946-1947) 1947 MA11 Kurd MA11
Mahabad

668 721 The Kurds were repulsed, however, in an attack on the Mahmudabad Pass near Saqqiz, designed to cut the Sanandaj Road, and again later after they had seized the hills overlooking Saqqiz. The Iranian army drove them off and erected round watch-towers of mud on the summits, each manned by thirty or forty soldiers. Finally a truce was effected whereby liaison officers were exchanged,* each side was to stay within its lines, and the Kurds were to have the right to inspect vehicles going from Saqqiz to Baneh and Sardasht and so stop arms and ammunition from reaching the Iranian garrisons there. The Shikak and the Herki returned to the north.

CHARACTER OF QAZI MOHAMMAD AND THE KURDISH REPUBLIC

186 • 609 After this period of conflict, Qazi Mohammad drew aside his iron curtain and gave non-Soviet observers a chance to look at his country. Although feeling against the British on account of the expulsion of the Barzanis from Iraq, Soviet-sponsored anti-British propaganda, and certain events in the past in which the Kurds considered they had been victims of British opportunism, was too strong to permit them to visit the tiny Kurdish Republic, at various times four Americans and one Frenchman were guests of Qazi Mohammad.

642 621 624 These observers found the Kurdish Republic to be a going concern. Although destitute of any legal basis whatsoever, Qazi Mohammad's *de facto* government continued as before, changing only the title of its ministers from *wezir* (minister) to *rais* (chief). Qazi Mohammad himself became merely the leader of the party (Pishwa-i-Hizb-i-Dimokrat-i-Kurd). The villages were run by their old landlords and tribal leaders with the aid of a gendarmerie locally recruited and dressed in Kurdish costume, but commanded by officers from Mahabad with Soviet uniforms. Mahabad itself, from a typically drab Persian provincial town, had become picturesque and colorful, its streets thronging with Kurds in national costume, free for the moment of the hated Iranian soldiers and gendarmes.

*The Kurdish liaison officer was "Colonel" Mohammad Hassanzadeh, one of the original founders of the Komala, later killed when the Iranian army plane in which he was traveling crashed near Rezaieh.

10/Soane C-3 (no date) 1940 MR.11 Kurd MR.11
Iraq

The Kurdish tribesman has a childlike

157 sense of humour. Like a child, too, he
• 609 unconsciously appreciates sympathy and
an understanding of his psychology. It is
partly because ruling races were in-
different to such considerations until the
evolution of British colonial policy in
backward countries that the Kurd has
been accustomed to regard every foreign
power as an enemy to be driven off or
exterminated before he himself suffers a
similar fate.

181 Like other mountain peoples the Kurds
176 are a martial race, but owing to their
separate communities and 'clannishness'
they have never flourished as such in
modern history. The only Kurdish king-
dom known to Europe is the ancient
kingdom of the Medes. Nevertheless the
Kurds have produced many great indi-
vidual soldiers. First and foremost comes
Cyrus the Great, who united the Medes
and Persians and in 538 B.C. conquered
Babylon. Others have found fame as

[p. 350(a)]
[last words read on p 350(B)]